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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAMA 001101

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP AND S/WCI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/19/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [BA](#) [BILAT](#) [CTR](#) [POL](#)
SUBJECT: GOB FEELS PRESSURE ON REMAINING GUANTANAMO
DETAINEES

REF: A. MANAMA 1000
[1](#)B. MANAMA 963

Classified By: Ambassador William T. Monroe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

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Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Activity in support of the remaining three Bahrainis detained at Guantanamo Bay increased following the recent suicides. Anti-U.S. MP Mohamed Khalid said he holds the U.S. Administration responsible for the deaths and called Guantanamo a "U.S. Nazi prison." Former detainee Abdulla Majid Al Nuaimi predicted additional suicide attempts and speculated that the reason behind the three suicides was to draw even more international focus onto Guantanamo. Amnesty International Bahrain started a letter-writing campaign and a petition drive in support of detainees. Arabic daily Al Ayam columnist Lamees Dhaif called on the MFA to augment its diplomatic efforts and MFA Assistant Undersecretary Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa spoke of GOB frustration with the raised level of pressure on the government to act and the unresolved status of the remaining detainees. End summary.

MP and Former Detainee Speak Out

[1](#)2. (SBU) The recent suicides at Guantanamo Bay have set off another round of press stories in Bahrain and renewed efforts to increase pressure on both the USG to release the remaining three Bahraini detainees and on the GOB to redouble its efforts to negotiate for their release. Al Minbar Islamic Society MP Mohamed Khalid, who is strongly anti-U.S., predictably responded to news of the suicides by stating publicly June 13 that he held the U.S. Administration responsible for the three deaths, and that he was deeply concerned about the condition of the Bahraini detainees. He expressed doubts about the official story on the suicides and characterized Guantanamo as a "U.S. Nazi prison."

[1](#)3. (U) English daily Gulf Daily News carried an interview June 13 with released Bahraini detainee Abdulla Majid Al Nuaimi in which he said that he was well acquainted with the three men who committed suicide and predicted that there would be more suicide attempts in the future. Al Nuaimi stated he thought that they had sacrificed themselves for the other detainees in order to draw international attention to Guantanamo. He surmised that in order for three to have succeeded, there must have been at least 15 detainees who attempted suicide at that same time. "The camp in Guantanamo

has high security and there is no chance for detainees to commit suicide. I've seen 10 people attempting to hang themselves at one time." Al Nuaimi also said that it was possible that the deaths were not suicides at all but the result of an attack by guards.

Public Calls for Action

¶4. (U) According to press reports June 18, Amnesty International (AI) Bahrain sent an initial batch of nearly 400 letters, signed by members of the public, to the U.S. Embassy and to the MFA. The letter writing campaign is reported to be part of activities planned to recognize the June 26 UN International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Those involved in the effort include AI Bahrain coordinator Nasser Burdestani and AI Bahrain member Nabeel Rajab, former vice president of Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR, dissolved). In addition, AI Bahrain began a petition drive June 6 called "10,000 Voices for Justice." AI Bahrain intends to send the petition to the U.S. Congress as soon as it has collected 10,000 signatures.

¶5. (U) Arabic daily Al Ayam carried an editorial June 19 in which Lamees Dhaif wrote that each Bahraini feels the pain of the Bahraini detainees at Guantanamo. (Note: Dhaif has previously written in support of the activities of MP Mohamed Khalid and Nabeel Rajab in calling for the release of the Bahraini detainees. End note.) "We thought that the American dream was the ultimate savior from oppression in the Arab World, but the reality of the dream of democracy and human rights has been revealed to us at Guantanamo." Dhaif urged the MFA to increase diplomatic efforts to bring the

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remaining Bahrainis home. She also called on the public to send email messages to the U.S. Embassy demanding their release.

MFA Frustration

¶6. (C) In a June 14 meeting with U.S. DOJ Associate Director David Warner, MFA Assistant Undersecretary for Coordination and Follow Up Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa expressed his and the GOB's frustration with the pressure and criticism the GOB is receiving from the Parliament, the media, and the public, who complain the GOB is not doing enough on behalf of the three remaining Bahraini detainees. He acknowledged that the Ambassador and the FM discuss Guantanamo matters nearly every time they meet, but hoped for more information from a DOJ official. Shaikh Abdul Aziz related that he had received a call at midnight on the day the suicides were announced, and until the identification of the three, was horrified to think that one of them might be Bahraini detainee Juma Al Dosary, who has been documented to have attempted suicide at least 11 times. The hardest part of the whole Guantanamo situation is the uncertain status of the detainees. He said it would not bother him to see the detainees jailed for 50 years if that were the result of a legal process. Pressure is building on the GOB to do something to resolve their uncertain status.

Comment

¶7. (C) If it had been the intent of those who committed suicide to raise the profile of Guantanamo, they achieved a measure of success in Bahrain. The GOB has borne the brunt of this increase in local pressure and has reached out to the Embassy to provide some evidence of progress toward the resolution of the Bahraini detainees' legal limbo. In light of these developments, the MFA is hoping for a positive

response to a recent request to send a Bahraini team to visit Guantanamo (reftels), as proof that it is taking action on behalf of the Bahraini detainees.

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